



NAME: COMMANDER (CDR) ANTHONY KUYPER

JOB TITLE: CHIEF PHARMACIST, INSCRIPTION
HOUSE HEALTH CENTER

AGENCY: INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE (IHS)

EDUCATION/DEGREES/CERTIFICATES/INSTITUTIONS:

CDR Anthony R. Kuyper earned his Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy in 1982 from Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. He also received the IHS National Clinical Pharmacist Credential, Basic Level, in April 2001.

CURRENT JOB DESCRIPTION:

As Chief Pharmacist of the USPHS Inscription House Health Center in Shonto, Arizona, CDR Kuyper focuses on the clinical aspects of patient care with an emphasis on providing appropriate intervention in drug therapy decisions and counseling patients on the use of their medications. To provide optimum patient care, CDR Kuyper works closely with other healthcare providers in the clinic such as physicians and nurses, and comprehensively reviews patient medical charts when making therapy decisions. Approximately 90% of his duty time is focused on the important responsibility of providing patient care. His enthusiasm in maximizing patient care led to his creation and implementation of a combination problem list/chronic medication profile for patients. This innovation not only improved drug ordering in patients with chronic medications and decreased the potential for transcription errors, but it also showed the commitment CDR Kuyper has for his patients.

Shonto, Arizona is a rural community with a population of less than 1,000 people. The nearest city with shopping is Flagstaff, which is approximately 120 miles away. Although some find this to be an extremely isolated area, CDR Kuyper, in contrast, finds the environment inviting and hospitable offering a wealth of personal and professional rewards. He feels that being in such an environment has strengthened the professional and social relationships among everyone at the health center. CDR Kuyper has learned that by living in the community that one serves, especially a small rural community, there is a personal stake in providing optimum healthcare services. Such relationships foster an enjoyable, efficient, and productive work environment. In addition, this officer enjoys the fact that he can look out the pharmacy windows and marvel at the beauty of the desert and the distant mesas.

QUALIFYING SKILLS FOR CURRENT POSITION:

CDR Kuyper's career experiences in the USPHS and his professional interactions have contributed greatly to the knowledge and skills that have prepared him for his current

responsibilities. Especially valuable to his professional development was earning the basic level IHS National Clinical Pharmacist Credential. This credential ensures that pharmacists are competent to determine appropriateness of therapy, can verify that patients understand their medications and the appropriate outcomes of their drug therapy, provide drug information, educate the staff on various drug therapies, provide health promotion/disease prevention activities relating to drug use, assess over-the-counter needs of the patients, and refill chronic medications at the pharmacist's discretion.

REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE USPHS AS A CAREER:

In his second year of pharmacy school, CDR Kuyper remembered his dean speaking about various pharmacy settings, one of which was the Indian Health Service (IHS). IHS appealed to him because of the extensive interaction between healthcare providers, especially pharmacists, and patients. IHS was known to offer pharmacists the opportunity to counsel patients, triage acute care visits, and participate in treatment plans and outpatient case management. These innovative approaches to pharmacy practice convinced CDR Kuyper that the Indian Health Service was the place for him.

PREVIOUS USPHS ASSIGNMENTS:

CDR Kuyper began his career with the USPHS in 1983 at the USPHS Indian Health Center in Kayenta, Arizona. First, he served as the Assistant Chief Pharmacist where he developed his foundation for communication skills with patients and physicians by interacting frequently and routinely with both. Subsequently, CDR Kuyper became the Chief Pharmacist where he reorganized the immunization accounting program, revitalized the pharmacy externship program, and further developed his managerial skills.

Next he became the Chief Pharmacist at the USPHS Indian Health Center in Taholah, Washington. To improve pharmacy operation, CDR Kuyper updated the pharmacy's policies and procedures. However, his main accomplishment was stressing the importance of patient counseling. CDR Kuyper was able to show pharmacy staff, clinic staff and patients the positive impact pharmacy counseling could have on patients' overall healthcare. Streamlining the SOPs and instituting patient counseling enhanced the quality of pharmacy practice and patient care.

In 1991, CDR Kuyper returned from the Pacific Northwest region to the desert as an Assistant Pharmacist at the USPHS Indian Medical Center in Tuba City, Arizona. This facility provided CDR Kuyper with more opportunities to enhance his clinical skills. In Tuba City, he experienced challenging and complex pharmaceutical situations. He was involved in treating patients on chemotherapy, analyzing the pharmacokinetics of drugs, and providing drug information to a variety of healthcare providers throughout the Center. His interactions with a more diversified group of healthcare providers helped him to strengthen his problem solving and pharmaceutical care skills.

MOST REWARDING USPHS PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

CDR Kuyper enjoys writing about his experiences at IHS. He feels that each IHS site has a unique and special clinical or administrative program that offers a challenging and exciting learning experience. He hopes that his writings will help others benefit from these experiences. He has published numerous pharmacy articles in professional journals. Some of his most noteworthy articles include: "Patient Counseling by Pharmacy Personnel: A Risk Management Perspective," IHS Provider, March 1991, and "Patient Counseling Detects Prescription Errors," Hospital Pharmacy, December 1993. Publishing these articles and sharing his experiences and knowledge with the public has been very rewarding to CDR Kuyper.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS/ACTIVITIES:

CDR Kuyper, along with his colleagues in the pharmacy department, is actively engaged in the training and mentorship of pharmacy students from the University of Illinois, Chicago (UIC). Using the knowledge and skills he has gained at his various IHS assignments, he has been able to contribute toward the development of a comprehensive program that encompasses all aspects of pharmacy practice.

SPECIAL NOTES OF INTEREST:

When he initially moved to the desert from the city for his first assignment at Kayenta, Arizona, CDR Kuyper's first inclination was to "get out" and return to his home state of Iowa. However, it only took two weeks of hiking in the mountains, river rafting, and enjoying the outdoors for him to know that this was where he belonged. He has come to realize that a wonderful aspect of being in such a beautiful environment is that it has offered him an opportunity to not only gain experience in pharmacy practice and function independently as a health care professional and pharmacist, but has provided him with the chance to experience and enjoy the culture and activities available here.

CDR Kuyper spends most of his free time enjoying the outdoors and treasuring the beauty that it offers. He has become a skilled and talented photographer and has captured the stunning essence of the Southwest in his breath-taking photographs that can be seen on the following website: <http://www.goodlight.us/>

CDR Kuyper exemplifies yet another pharmacist who has seized the opportunity to turn seemingly undesirable circumstances into a wonderfully rewarding career accomplishment. Life in the remote areas of the Southwest with the Indian Health Service has improved patient care services for the Native Americans while giving CDR Kuyper a greater appreciation for the lifestyles and culture of his patients as well as the beauty of his country. It becomes simple to understand why CDR Kuyper "would not trade this life for anything".